**Still poached for ivory**

Despite a ban on the international trade in ivory, African elephants are still being poached in large numbers. Tens of thousands of elephants are being killed every year for their ivory tusks. The ivory is often carved into ornaments and jewellery – China is the biggest consumer market for such products.  
  
The ban on international trade was introduced in 1989 by CITES (Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora) after years of unprecedented poaching. In the 1980s, an estimated 100,000 elephants were being killed per year and up to 80% of herds were lost in some regions.  
  
The ban allowed some populations to recover, especially where elephants were adequately protected.  
  
But there has been an upsurge in poaching and illegal ivory trafficking in recent years, driven by increasing demand in Asia, which has led to steep declines in forest elephant numbers and some savannah elephant populations.  
  
Insufficient anti-poaching capacity, weak law enforcement and corruption undermine efforts to stop the poaching and trafficking in some countries.

**Still poached for ivory Increasing conflict with people**  
As human populations expand, more land is being converted to agriculture. So elephant habitat is shrinking and becoming more fragmented, and people and elephants are increasingly coming into contact - and conflict - with each other.  
  
Elephants sometimes raid farmers’ fields and damage their crops – affecting the farmers’ livelihoods – and may even kill people. Elephants are sometimes killed in retaliation.  
  
With human populations continuing to grow across their range, habitat loss and degradation and conflict with communities - will remain major threats to elephants' survival.

**What we do**

We support projects to protect elephants from poaching, seek solutions for human-elephant conflict, equip and train community conservationists, increase our knowledge of the treatment and prevention of disease and educate people.

### **REASONS TO SAVE THE ELEPHANT:**

* If we don’t act now elephants could face localized extinctions.
* In some countries of Africa including Senegal, Somalia and Sudan, elephants have already been driven to extinction.
* Communities across Africa are dependent on elephants for an income through tourism. Saving the elephants also means preventing poverty, sustaining livelihoods and promoting sustainable tourism.
* Elephants are a keystone species. Other animals, plants and entire ecosystems rely on them for survival.
* ‘As go the elephants, so do the trees.’ Elephants are known as ‘nature’s gardeners’, plants and trees rely on elephants to disperse their seeds far and wide through their dung.
* Elephant’s large footprints act as water collectors for smaller animals.
* By uprooting trees to feed, they control the tree population leaving grasses to thrive and sustain animals such as wildebeests and zebras.
* Elephants share the same emotions and cognitive behavior as humans. They grieve for their lost loved ones, they feel fear, joy and empathy and are highly praised for their intelligence.